THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) At present, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are operating 208 LPG distributorships in the State of Assam for distribution of LPG connections.

(b) and (c) At present, there is no registered waiting list with the LPG distributors of OMCs and LPG connections are available on demand in all the existing LPG markets throughout the country, including the State of Assam.

VRS in ONGC and BPCL

1451. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce revised VRS Scheme for ONGC and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the scheme is proposed to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) have submitted proposals for introduction of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS). The proposed Schemes contain certain deviations from Department of Public Enterprises Guidelines dated 05.05.2000 and are under examination.

Export of LPG

1452. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been exporting LPG to Bangladesh and other countries;

(b) what is the quantum of exports to foreign countries per annum and the amount of foreign exchange earned per annum;

(c) whether it is proposed to double the LPG export to Bangladesh, as reported in the Financial Express of 17th August, 2002; and

(d) whether this will affect home consumption?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Government have allowed upto March, 2003, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) to export LPG to SAARC countries, subject to the condition that only the imported LPG would be re-exported and that, too, without impinging the need to meet the domestic demand. IOC has exported 270 Metric Tonnes LPG to Bangladesh during the current year. The quantum of foreign exchange earning on this quantity of exports undertaken by IOC till date is US$ 84,000.

Acquisition of land for hydrocarbon exploration

1453. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ONGC and OIL have been acquiring land for exploitation, exploration and production of hydrocarbons;

(b) whether it is also a fact that works have been abandoned at many places due to full exploitation of the wells, uneconomical viability and non-availability of hydrocarbons;

(c) if so, whether the land so acquired has been returned to the original owner; and

(d) if not, in what manner such land would be put to use?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) While the land purchased on an outright basis is not returned since Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) owns it; the land acquired on lease basis for the above purposes is surrendered, with restoration charges, under the following conditions:—

(i) If the drilled well is found to be devoid of hydrocarbon and if there is no other utility of the well, *e.g.*, for effluent disposal etc.

(ii) If the well turns out to be hydrocarbon producer, only the required area for operations (like workover etc.) is retained and the excess land is surrendered.

(iii) If the production from all the hydrocarbon bearing zones from a given well is exhausted.